

What is claimed is:

1. A system for managing data congestion in a communications network which establishes communication cells at respective locations on the surface of the earth to enable communication between a plurality of user terminals and at least one network controller, comprising:

a congestion determiner, adapted to determine that data congestion exists in said network which interferes with an ability of at least one user terminal to communicate in said network; and

a congestion controller, adapted to control at least one of downlinking of data from said network controller to at least one select group of said user terminals and uplinking of data from said at least one select group of said user terminals to said network controller, in response to said determined data congestion.

2. A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

said communications network includes a satellite communications network and said user terminals include satellite terminals; and

said congestion controller controls said at least one of said downlinking and uplinking of said data to and from at least one select group of said satellite terminals.

3. A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

said congestion controller controls said at least one of said downlinking and uplinking of said data to and from said at least one select group of user terminals which are all located within a single uplink cell.

4. A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

said congestion controller controls said at least one of said downlinking and uplinking of said data to and from said at least one select group of user terminals which are located within multiple cells.

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5. A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

said congestion controller controls said at least one of said downlinking and uplinking of said data to and from said at least one select group of user terminals located within all uplink cells of said network.

6. A method for managing congestion in a communications network which establishes communication cells at respective locations on the surface of the earth to enable communication between a plurality of user terminals and at least one network controller, comprising:

determining the existence of data congestion in said network which interferes with an ability of at least one user terminal to communicate in said network; and

controlling at least one of downlinking of data from said network controller to at least one select group of said user terminals and uplinking of data from at least one select group of said user terminals to said network controller, in response to said data congestion.

7. A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein:

said communications network includes a satellite communications network and said user terminals include satellite terminals; and

said congestion controlling controls said at least one of said downlinking and uplinking of said data to and from at least one select group of said satellite terminals.

8. A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein:

said congestion controlling controls said at least one of said downlinking and uplinking of said data to and from said at least one select group of user terminals which are all located within a single cell.

9. A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein:

said congestion controlling controls said at least one of said downlinking and uplinking of said data to and from said at least one select group of user terminals which are located within multiple cells.

10. A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein:

said congestion controlling controls said at least one of said downlinking and uplinking of said data to and from said at least one select group of user terminals located within all uplink cells of said network.

11. A computer-readable medium of instructions, adapted to control a communications network to manage congestion in a communications network which establishes communication cells at respective locations on the surface of the earth to enable communication between a plurality of user terminals and at least one network controller, comprising:

a first set of instruction, adapted to control the communications network to determine that data congestion exists in said network which interferes with an ability of at least one user terminal to communicate in said network; and

a second set of instruction, adapted to control at least one of downlinking of data from said network controller to at least one select group of said user terminals and uplinking of data from at least one select group of said user terminals to said network controller, in response to said determined data congestion.

12. A computer-readable medium of instructions as claimed in claim 11, wherein:

said communications network includes a satellite communications network and said user terminals include satellite terminals; and

said second set of instructions controls said at least one of said downlinking and uplinking of said data to and from at least one select group of said satellite terminals.

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13. A computer-readable medium of instructions as claimed in claim 11, wherein:

said second set of instructions controls said controls said at least one of said downlinking and uplinking of said data to and from said at least one select group of user terminals which are all located within a single cell.

14. A computer-readable medium of instructions as claimed in claim 11, wherein:

said second set of instructions controls said at least one of said downlinking and uplinking of said data to and from said at least one select group of user terminals which are located within multiple cells.

15. A computer-readable medium of instructions as claimed in claim 11, wherein:

said second set of instructions controls said at least one of said downlinking and uplinking of said data to and from said at least one select group of user terminals which are located in all uplinks cells of said network.